

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Original claims 1-5 have been amended to improve claim language. Claims 6-20 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. The new claims find support in at least the drawings as filed. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The Examiner's rejection of all original claims as being either anticipated by or obvious over *Schmidt* (U.S. Patent No. 4,946,454) is noted. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections, because the reference fails to teach or suggest the claimed first and second folding guide lines as defined in original claim 1, lines 12-22. The original language of claim 1 has been clarified to read as "said first folding guide lines diverge toward said front waist region and... said second folding guide lines diverge toward said rear waist region." *See* amended claim 1. In other words, claim 1 requires that the first and second folding guide lines diverge towards two different waist regions, respectively. In *Schmidt*, the folding lines 20 and 26 diverge toward the same (front) waist region 12, as best seen in Fig. 1 of the reference. The rejection is therefore improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 1 is thus patentable over the applied art of record. Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to claim 1. The dependent claims are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features of the invention neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art.

As to claim 6, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest that "each of said non-folded portions extends continuously without being folded from one of the transversely opposite side edges of said body fluid absorbent assembly to the other." This feature finds support in at least FIGs. 4, 6, and 7 of the application as filed. *Schmidt* requires a longitudinal folding guide line 18 (FIGs. 1-2) and therefore the "non-folded portions" of *Schmidt* cannot extend continuously without

being folded from one of the transversely opposite side edges of said body fluid absorbent assembly to the other in the presently claimed manner.

As to claim 7, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest that “said body fluid absorbent assembly is further folded along a section of said crossline between said two points.” This feature finds support in at least FIG. 7, at section L.

As to claims 8-10, the applied reference does not fairly teach or suggest the claimed third folding guide lines, each of said third folding guide lines being located between one of the first folding guide lines and one of the second folding guide lines. This feature finds support in at least FIGs. 4, 6, 7, at reference numeral U. *Schmidt* teaches at best only two pairs of folding guide lines, e.g., 20, 26, rather than three pairs as presently claimed.

New independent claim 11 is directed to a disposable pants-type wearing article comprising, among other things, “a pair of first folding guide lines extending... toward the front waist region, and... a pair of second folding guide lines extending ... toward the rear waist region.” In other words, claim 11 requires that the first and second folding guide lines extend towards two different waist regions, respectively. In *Schmidt*, the folding lines 20 and 26 extend toward the same (front) waist region 12, as best seen in Fig. 1 of the reference. Therefore, independent claim 11 is believed patentable over *Schmidt*.

Claims 12-19 depend from claim 11, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to claim 11. The dependent claims are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features of the invention neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art.

As to claims 12-13, note the discussion *supra* with respect to claim 6.

As to claims 14-15, note the discussion *supra* with respect to claim 8.

As to claims 17-19, note the discussion *supra* with respect to claim 7.

New independent claim 20 is directed to a disposable pants-type wearing article comprising, among other things, limitations similar to those of amended claim 1, i.e., “a pair of first folding guide lines diverging from said middle zone toward the front waist region; and a pair of

second folding guide lines diverging from said middle zone toward the rear waist region.”

Therefore, claim 20 is believed patentable for at least the reason advanced with respect to claim 1.

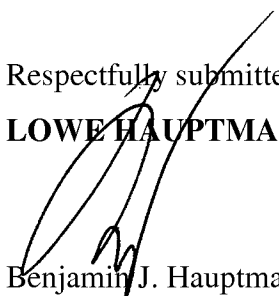
Each of the Examiner’s rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant’s attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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